

all human customs and opinions must necessarily change by development; but this one volume is an exception to the laws of development, its Divine Author having anticipated the minutest changes of the future and perfectly adapted its statements and principles to every possible exigency of its varied task through all stages of the strange eventful history of humanity.

And this must be the profound and abiding conviction of the living Church of God, as, against all opposition, she steadily prosecutes her great work of spreading the Gospel, of pressing forward the world-wide advertisement and dissemination of Bible truth—*this truth is everlasting*. Never for an instant must the "angel" yield to the first insinuation of a doubt that within the boards of this one Book she holds life for the death and light for the darkness of all ruined humanity in all circumstances and at all times however far future, for the complicated and inveterate diseases of sin the sovereign elixir of immortal health, for all the ills that flesh is heir to Heaven's never-failing panacea, God's own everlasting catholicism. Let this conviction, my brethren, take full possession of us, and carry us forward! If there be dungeons yet to be opened and fetters yet to be broken, if there be moral swamps yet to be drained and clouds of superstitious miasma yet to be chased away, if there yet be priestcraft to uproot and tyranny to strike down, we must feel persuaded—nay, *we are persuaded*—that this one old Gospel is the instrument by the honest use of which the gigantic task is to be accomplished, and that because it is "everlasting."

And is not such a persuasion founded on incontrovertible evidence? After the youngest part of this Gospel was nearly fifteen hundred years old what was it that aroused from the dishonourable and passive lethargy of ages the mind of Europe? If the Reformation inaugurated modern liberty, progress and manhood, beyond all question it was the Bible which inaugurated the Reformation. What was it that gave England and Scotland (and their colony in the North of Ireland), small and poor as they naturally are, the wonderful name of Great Britain, and their place of eminence among the nations? The free circulation of this Bible. What was it that within the last fifty years transformed the savage cannibalism of the South Pacific islands into communities of quiet, sober, industrious, pious men and women? What was it that but a few years ago broke the horrid spell of ages and delivered the down-trodden, priest-ridden people of Italy, putting ancient Rome under the protection of a free and intelligent parliament? What is it that is now acting like a charm on India and Japan, crushing out hoary devil-worship and blessing them with liberal institutions? Science? No! Political philosophy? No! This old Bible! YES! Reason and argue as men may, the historical fact stands indisputable, the Bibles translated, printed and circulated by John Wickliffe and Martin Luther were the living seed of all these things. Popery, Ignorance, Heathenism, and Barbarism have retired before the Bible everywhere; free institutions, personal independence, virtuous and happy homes, good schools and good health, good morals, good drains, good roads and good shops have everywhere followed this Bible. That all this is simple historical fact no man whose opinion is worth a straw will venture to deny. This one Book is the power of God. There is no religion, there is no philosophy, there is no political doctrine, there is no physical force at this moment on the face of the earth that wields one half as much transforming and aggressive power as this one old Book. If you ask the reason why, there is but one answer: It is "everlasting" truth.

### III.—THE AREA OVER WHICH THE COMMISSION OF THIS ANGEL—THE CHURCH EXTENDS: "EVERY NATION AND TONGUE AND PEOPLE."

Such is the vast sphere of action presented to the Christian Church. "The field is the world," said Jesus Christ. The British and Foreign Bible Society has for many years, without staggering at the magnitude of the prospect, accepted this enterprise. Whatever be the perplexing variety of phenological type, moral status and political condition presented by the populations